

And for those who are rightly concerned that in this period in our Nation's history we could face war without end, I ask you this question: If you disagree with my scenario, with my analysis that a democratic Iraq combined with a democratic Afghanistan will eventually put pressure on Syria and Iran whereby they will collapse from within, if you disagree with that, find me a better solution. Because I assure you that if Iraq goes back to being a state sponsor of terror and Iran gets a nuclear weapon, that scenario is far more likely to produce the war without end than will be the liberation and emancipation of people throughout that region and the demands of Syrians and Iranians for the freedom that we here so often take for granted.

I yield back to the distinguished gentleman.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. McCOTTER. I could not agree more.

The stakes are high. The stakes are high in Iraq. The stakes are high in Afghanistan. But the stakes are even higher and the threat is even worse were we to pull out, were we to set arbitrary deadlines, and were we to tell those Iraqi citizens who three times came out in an incredible show of their love for democracy, under threats of death to them and to their family members were they to vote, those proud days when they wore their purple finger upright and said yes, I was happy to vote.

They have stood up a democracy, through very difficult ethnic, religious and a lot of political divisions that Saddam Hussein, the dictator who ruled for too many years sowed in order to keep himself in power. And now they have got a unified government. Now Saddam Hussein is on trial. Now we have captured so many of those al Qaeda leaders, the successes that we have had in Afghanistan in making sure that the Taliban would not control that beautiful country again. Were we to fail in these efforts, what would we say to those Iraqi families who sacrificed so long and so hard to finally have a democracy?

For those freedom-loving Afghani citizens, for those freedom loving Iraqi citizens, and for the United States' own survival, we have got to make sure we win this war against these jihadist entities.

THE 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP: DEMOCRATIC PROPOSALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I can take the time of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), but I certainly cannot replace the leader of our group which we call the "30-somethings." I happen to be the "something" of that 30-something group.

I am sure that the younger members of the group will join me soon, but they are out right now. If they are watching, I hope they come soon to the floor, where we can talk about the problems with our economy, and clearly there are many. But as I sat here listening to the previous speakers, who are members of the House International Relations Committee, I feel compelled to speak to their remarks.

I think the gentle lady who chairs the Middle East Subcommittee spoke about the unified government that now sits in Iraq. Well, her understanding and my understanding of the term "unified" I would suggest are irreconcilable.

The Iraqi parliament since it was constituted has been unable to agree on hardly any issue. In fact, they have entered into a particularly fractious moment where the continued existence of the government is in some doubt.

But what I find interesting is the only issue that they have agreed on, and it is important to understand that there is some 275 members of the Iraqi parliament, is a resolution condemning the State of Israel for defending itself.

□ 2100

The language that the Iraqi Parliament used in that resolution was condemning the criminal aggression of the State of Israel in defending itself.

Now, clearly we can have a debate on the relationships in the Middle East where we can have differences and we can educate and inform each other, but to say that there is a unified government in Iraq today is simply inaccurate. It is not true. It is very problematic, and both speakers and their colleagues and friends of mine continue to make references to Iran and how we need to have a strong, democratic Iraq to help us as we attempt to navigate the shoals of the political realities in the Middle East.

But the problem is what is not spoken about, at least in this Chamber, on this night, is the fact of a growing warm relationship between Iraq and Iran, not the United States and Iraq, but Iraq and Iran.

Mr. Speaker, this is irrefutable. There are some in the Iraqi Parliament today who are stridently adversarial to the United States. Moqtada al-Sadr, a Shiite leader, who has at his disposal a militia that is called Ahmadi Army, has 30 members of that 275-member body who are loyal to him. And maybe it has been forgotten, but it was the United States military that sought to apprehend him on the charges of murder some several years ago.

We cannot make it up, Mr. Speaker. We have to speak the truth, the unvarnished truth, and stringing together platitudes about democracy does not cut it, Mr. Speaker.

What is the reality today in Iraq? Well, this photo to my right speaks to that reality. To the far right is the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Maliki, and with him is the President of Iran who

spoke yesterday in the United Nations, spoke in the United States in New York at the U.N., who I hear many in this Chamber demonize, and with some cause. He is a Holocaust denier, but who he is shaking hands with, Mr. Speaker? He is shaking hands with the Prime Minister of Iraq.

And by the way, Mr. Speaker, we invited the Prime Minister of Iraq to come and address the United States Congress, which he did right in this very Chamber, and a week or two later he is in Tehran, shaking hands with the President of Iran. Now, that is not the full story, Mr. Speaker. There is more. There is much more.

Now, I am not suggesting that there is an alliance yet between Iraq and Iran, but do not let it go unnoticed that many in the current government in Iraq spent years in exile in Tehran. There are relationships between many of the political figures in both of these countries. Let us not continue to paint this rosy scenario that simply is inaccurate. It is not true. I am not suggesting anyone is intentionally misleading, but these are the facts. This is the picture.

Now, one might say, well, they are neighbors and there has to be some rapport that benefits everybody. I do not necessarily disagree with that; but go back to 1980-1988, they were 8 years at war, Mr. Speaker, a war that took hundreds of thousands of lives on both sides. Iraq and Iran were bitter enemies, and today, Mr. Speaker, we have a handshake; but, like I said, we have much more.

The Iranians, not the Americans, Mr. Speaker, but the Iranians are building an international airport near Najaf, which is a major Shiite city in southern Iraq. Mr. Speaker, the Iranian Government is providing \$1 billion worth of credits to the private sector in Iraq.

But this is the cherry on top of the ice cream sundae, Mr. Speaker. Iraq and Iran, which dominates the conversation here in Washington, which is part of the front-page news daily in this country, Iraq and Iran have consummated a bilateral military cooperation agreement, Mr. Speaker. Can anybody explain that? I cannot explain it, Mr. Speaker. I cannot. I cannot figure that out.

But what I do see is the reality of almost 3,000 American soldiers dead in Iraq, in excess of 20,000 wounded, many of whom are severely wounded, whose lives are forever impaired by some permanent disability. I see the expenditure of hundreds of billions of dollars of American taxpayers' hard-earned income in Iraq. And what is the progress that I see, Mr. Speaker? Well, I see the handshake, I see this relationship, and I see a bilateral military cooperation agreement, Mr. Speaker. Can you or somebody from the majority side please explain what that is all about?

I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that information came to me from the Congressional Research Service, and Mr. Speaker, realize that that service is a

bipartisan agency, created by Congress to provide Members unvarnished, factual information.

So we stand here on the floor and we talk about how good it is and we are for democracy, but you know what, Mr. Speaker? What kind of democracy are we getting at the cost of thousands of lives of American soldiers and hundreds of billions of dollars from the hard-earned income of the American taxpayer? Is this what we are getting? Does this serve our national interests? I do not know, Mr. Speaker. I do not know. But I have to tell you something. I do not think anybody in this body knows, and that is an indictment, Mr. Speaker, on the wall of this institution because the majority party ought to have insisted, in the course of the exercise of its oversight role and responsibility, on answers to these very simple questions. But oh no, let us ignore them and get up and talk about democracy.

My friend from Michigan, a very erudite, very thoughtful gentleman, has an interesting view of history, is conversant with history, and history gives us context, but to ignore what the reality is on the ground, I see my friend from Florida walked in. I want to welcome him. I know he has had a busy evening. It is good to have Mr. MEEK here finally.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, it is always a pleasure to join you in doing the 30-Something hour, and since us "some-things" are carrying the hour tonight, since we do not have the 30s here, I understand they are en route, but I want to thank you for your dedication to be able to deliver a positive message here in the Congress.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am not really delivering a positive message. What I am is expressing a concern about the lack of oversight and the lack of accountability or calling to account the actions of this administration by this Republican Congress. We have a right to know. It is a debt that is owed us. It is a debt of blood and hundreds of billions of dollars, Mr. Speaker.

There is a long list of emerging relationships and agreements between these two countries. Iran and Iraq just recently signed a memorandum of understanding, under which pipelines would be constructed to allow Iran to import Iraqi crude oil from Basra. Under the agreement, Iran is to finance the three pipelines that will be built to implement the agreement. Again, this is from a report from the Congressional Research Service dated June 14, 2006. That is before the famous handshake.

To say or suggest that things are going well in Afghanistan, Mr. Speaker, is a disconnect from reality, and the American people deserve the absolute, full truth as to what the reality is.

□ 2115

Mr. Speaker, we had a hearing today in International Relations. Its focus was Afghanistan. It was extremely dis-

turbing, Mr. Speaker, because 5 years later, Afghanistan is heading quickly in the wrong direction.

President Bush says we are winning the war on terror. And I will stipulate not on Iraq, but our invasion of Iraq, which I and every other Members of Congress voted for, was about the war on terror. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we are going to win the war on terror, we need to change Commanders in Chief and have a Congress that will hold these people responsible, because I will tell you something, we are doing everything to lose Afghanistan. It has become a narcostate. In the year 2001, there were 73 tons of opium, which is used to make heroin. This past year, there were 6,100 tons of poppy and opium.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT, when I came and shared with you the positive message, I mean, when I said the positive message, I wanted to make sure that people understand there are people here in the Congress willing to work in a bipartisan way to make sure that we do the things that we need to do to make sure that the American troops that are on the ground not only in Afghanistan, but in the war in Iraq, that there are Members of Congress who are willing to come to the floor and give voice to those individuals who are there.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the gentleman would yield for just a minute. I was here listening to several of our colleagues on the other side speak about these various issues, and I just felt the need to put out what the realities are rather than simply talk in terms that are hopeful and optimistic, but in a world apart from what the reality is.

If this administration is sincere, of course it is, about winning the war on terror, there has to be a dramatic change in direction. Listen to this just for one moment, if you would. If you would, Mr. MEEK.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I have to, Mr. DELAHUNT.

Mr. DELAHUNT. This is in contrast to what was said earlier here on the floor: United States efforts in Afghanistan are failing. Afghanistan faces its highest levels of violence and corruption since its liberation. Drug money continues to finance terrorism. That failure, coupled with the aggressive efforts of the terrorists, threatens to destroy Afghanistan's democracy, a free government that Americans and coalition forces have died to support.

Mr. MEEK, Mr. Speaker, those are not my words. Those are the words of the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, HENRY HYDE, in a letter that he sent this week to President Bush.

So please don't come down to this floor and paint a rosy picture. We are in trouble. The world is in trouble. And if we are going to win the war on terror, we have got to change direction and develop a strategy that will accomplish that after 5 years. It is 5 years

since 9/11, and Afghanistan is back to ground zero.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. DELAHUNT. I think it is important to the point, sir, that the 30-Something Working Group, we come to the floor to share the truth and to share the reality of what is happening here in Congress and what is not happening here in Congress. And I think it is very, very important, very important that we bring the facts to the floor.

As you know, General Abizaid, who is over Central Command and the lead commander in Iraq, said earlier this year that after Iraqi elections, Mr. Speaker, that we would see a downtick in U.S. troops in Iraq, in the war in Iraq.

Because of a lack of a coalition, Mr. Speaker, Iraqis are no longer in the driver's seat as it relates to being able to stand up on behalf of their country. And so because we don't have a coalition, and the second largest coalition in Iraq, Mr. DELAHUNT, is U.S. contractors paid for by U.S. taxpayers.

And I have another example, because I believe there is a war in Iraq, but there is also misunderstanding and deception here as it relates to border security, Mr. DELAHUNT. This is fact, not fiction. And I just want to take 3 minutes to just talk about fact, not fiction, because I know that Mr. RYAN is here, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ is here, and we need to be able to lay these facts out.

Just today was a story leaked, and tomorrow the Boeing Company will receive what we call the SBInet that will do surveillance on the border between the U.S. and Mexico and also between the U.S. and Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that we had two other initiatives prior to this one as it relates to surveillance of our borders that spent \$426 million, Mr. Speaker, and it was cost overruns and did not meet the contractual agreement that they made with the Department of Homeland Security. Now, this is a \$2.5 billion initiative that Boeing will have.

Let's put Boeing aside, because I am not here to talk about Boeing. I am here to talk about the lack of capacity of the Department of Homeland Security and the lack of effort as it relates to the Congress to make sure that we protect our borders.

The 9/11 Commission that I spoke of in detail last week, Mr. Speaker, said that we need 2,000 Border Patrol agents per year; 2,000 Border Patrol agents per year. You thought the President heard that message? Maybe not. You want to talk tough on border security and homeland security, or you just want to talk common sense on border security and homeland security?

The President sent his budget to this Congress because he felt that he could do it, because this Congress, A, doesn't have the will and the desire as it relates to the Republican majority to make sure that we have enough border agents on the border. Now, we can burn

all kinds of Federal jet fuel in the Republican leadership going down to the border talking about, "Oh, I am here to make sure that we protect our borders, and we want to make sure that things go the way they are supposed to go." But the bottom line is, and I think this is important for every Member of Congress to understand, the fact is that 215 border agents were requested by this administration.

On the Democratic side of the aisle, Mr. RYAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. Speaker, we call for 2,000 border agents in line with the bipartisan 9/11 Commission report. Now, \$2.5 billion, the Department of Homeland Security and even before they were created legacy agencies that are now in the Department of Homeland Security oversaw the two initiatives prior to this new one, changing the name, but not the oversight.

Now, I am the ranking member on Homeland Security and the Subcommittee on Oversight, Management, and Integration. We have three hearings, Mr. Speaker, and we had those hearings because the inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security said that the money was squandered, 426 million of the U.S. taxpayers' dollars. They had cameras that didn't work. They had cameras in areas where Border Patrol agents could not even respond to watching individuals cross the border because they didn't have enough agents.

On 9/11, combining three shifts of 24-hour shifts on 9/11, there were 250 agents on the border between Canada and the United States of America, 250. Now, we are not talking about all at once, we are talking about three shifts. So I think it is important.

If we are going to talk about what the facts are, and that is what I enjoy about our working group that we have here is that we come to the floor with the facts. We have the will and desire because we have amendment after amendment that shows that here on this side of the aisle that we called for the 2,000 border agents since the 9/11 report was released, that was a book in Barnes and Noble and on Amazon.com and a number, and I encourage Americans to take a look at that, because this Republican majority is not following that. Come to the floor, tough talk, but not backing it up.

And the great frustration of so many Americans as it relates to not only responding, yes, we can go out and link ourselves up and sing "God Bless America" out here on the steps of the Capitol, but the real commitment to protecting and having real security that we call for in our plan, HouseDemocrats.gov, anyone can get it, any Members of Congress can get it, of real security is making sure that we scan our containers for nuclear weapons, to make sure that we check air cargo before it goes in. We have passengers and Americans basically taking off everything to get on a plane, but meanwhile the cargo goes in the bottom of the plane unchecked.

The frustration that Mr. DELAHUNT has is the fact that people come down to the floor saying one thing, and it is actually another. It is like me saying, "Look over there," when the action is over here, or the lack thereof.

So I think it is important that we outline these issues. Not the Democratic Caucus, not Mr. RYAN, not Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, not Mr. DELAHUNT that comes here with this report. We are talking about the inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security that says the Department of Homeland Security doesn't have the management capacity to oversee a contract even smaller than the \$2.5 billion contract. So nowadays before the election, Mr. RYAN, the Department of Homeland Security is saying that we have monitors, and that we are going to monitor the movement on the border. How about the apprehension of individuals who are crossing the border? How about having border agents who are able and detention centers that are able to handle the capacity of those individuals who are coming over?

And then we had an amendment on the floor, a bill on the floor, recently saying that we are going to build a double-link fence. I voted against it because it was a joke. We are going to build a double-link fence of 200 miles or so on the border that individuals are crossing; but, better yet, it doesn't appropriate any money to build the fence. You want to talk about the Potomac two-step in the worst way. That is just like me going to my kids and saying, "Hey, guess what? We are getting ready to go to Walt Disney World, but meanwhile we don't have the gas money to get there."

I mean, you know, we are making fun of this, but what I am saying is that this is for real. And so we have Members coming to the floor who are representing to not only, Mr. Speaker, you, other Members of the House that we are actually doing something on the majority side, and we are not doing anything but saying we are going to go right, but then going left. I am talking about the Republican majority that is doing that.

So if we are going to be real, if we are going to have real security, Mr. Speaker, that we talk so much about here on this floor on this side of the aisle, if we get the majority of this House, we have the will and the desire to implement the full recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

You want to respect those families, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, that you talked so eloquently about just a couple of days ago here on this floor when you took the opportunity to walk the Members through what they haven't done and what they should do? We want to respect the memory of those individuals, we want to respect those first responders who put their lives on the line, climbed up that building; some lost their lives; some are still living with the aftermath of their her-

oism. If we want to respect them, then let's do what they said do. And if you are a Republican, Independent, or Democrat, you have to have a problem with the fact that these Members are coming to the floor representing one thing and doing another.

So they can burn all kinds of Federal jet fuel and taxpayers' expense all they want to, Mr. DELAHUNT. And your frustration as it relates to Afghanistan when we had them on the run and now we have commanders, need it be NATO commanders or need it be U.S. commanders, saying we need help. General Abizaid, he had a press conference 48 hours ago, says, no, troop levels won't be coming down; we are going to still have 140,000 troops in the war in Iraq.

□ 2130

We have 147,000 troops right now in the war in Iraq, and we will probably end up having 147,000 troops that are on their fourth and fifth deployments.

Yesterday in Iraq, we lost four marines, leave alone the countless number of Iraqi individuals that are not even wearing a uniform, just trying to make a living, that have lost their lives. We have a policy here in the U.S. Congress of saying, because the President said stay the course, and we have a rubber-stamp majority that is not even exercising Article I, section 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

The lack of oversight and the lack of legislative authority, and this is what we get. We get individuals coming to the floor making statements that they know full well are not true on the reality of the appropriation and the reality of the direction of the policy of this country. Follow the President. So shall it be written, so shall it be done. That is not the democracy that the American people woke up early one Tuesday morning to vote for representation here in this House.

Mr. RYAN, as I yield to you, Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Green Party, Reform Party, they voted for representation and we are saying that we have the will and the desire to provide that representation.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If you just look at what the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) has said, "Unfortunately, Congress is not ready to face the reality of the problem." He is talking about airline security. That is not us. That is not Democrats saying it. Republicans now are saying it, Newt Gingrich, generals, Republicans, Bill Buckley. I mean, come on, they are all saying this, that they are not addressing the need of the problem.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Before you go any further, I have a quick point to make. I think we should acknowledge, and I would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge that our friend and colleague from Ohio is here tonight playing hurt. He is a real trooper. I understand, and maybe Mr. MEEK can elaborate on this, and yes, bring out the crutches. But last night TIM RYAN and KENDRICK MEEK, along with a bipartisan group of Members of this House, played a football

game against the Capitol Police, and Mr. RYAN went down fairly quickly, I understand.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. He is yielding to me. Mr. RYAN, it is better when someone else talks about your great contribution.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I made it to the third quarter.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, even you participated in this fund-raiser. This is very important. This was a fund-raiser to raise money for the police officers who lost their lives here protecting the Capitol, to make sure that their children have an opportunity to go to college and be all that they can be.

Mr. RYAN got caught up into the moment last night. He played quarterback. Made a couple of plays, running the ball, bad knee and all, and ended up hurting his knee. Tonight he comes with not only the will and the desire, but the dedication. He is standing here on one leg with crutches. He is here to deliver the message on behalf of the 30-somethings. We commend your dedication for watching out for not only the American people but those at the U.S. Capitol. We appreciate your sacrifice for being here tonight, standing on a bad leg and trying to recover at the same time.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. MEEK, let me interrupt one more time.

To be serious for a moment, I want to acknowledge both of you for participating. I would add that those who are watching should understand that this is an effort by both Republicans and Democrats for a tremendous cause. The men and women who serve in the Capitol Police, as well as the men and women who serve in this Congress, some of whom are behind us right now, are dedicated professionals. They do an extraordinary job. It is difficult. In the case of those two Capitol Police who were killed, what we can do for their family is something that we all participate in, and we owe a debt of gratitude to them. Great job.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentleman would yield, last year we raised \$50,000 for a trust fund for the kids of these families. This year we raised \$30,000, so there will be \$80,000. Hopefully we can raise more in the next couple of years. I am not necessarily saying I will play in the game next year. I will be happy to write a check, but to make sure that there is a trust fund there for all of these kids, I think we should eventually expand it to all of Capitol Police who get killed in the line of duty protecting us and protecting this Capitol. I think it is important.

I didn't really want to bring it up, but our coach for the team is TOM OSBORNE, the former great coach of the University of Nebraska. He was our coach, and I was an old quarterback. So if TOM OSBORNE is my coach, I am going to try to impress him.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And that is the result.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. This is the result for my trying to impress TOM OSBORNE.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman would yield, this is obviously not a playing field I can participate in terms of the debate or the discussion, given the difference in my stature, and I mean physical stature, versus yours.

But Mr. RYAN, I will point out as your athletic prowess absolutely prece-
des you, given the baseball performance and now the football performance, perhaps you should become a charitable donor henceforth as opposed to participant on the field.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentlewoman would yield, last night's injury has now relegated me to yoga and golf. So I have changed my future. At 33 years old, I am now limited to different forms of yoga and improving my golf game. No basketball. No baseball. In fact, last night Mr. MEEK, as he drove me from the field to the locker room and almost to the hospital, said this morning when he picked me up to take me to the gym, he said, "I have your spikes in my car." And I said, "You can burn them because I am never going to need them again."

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. But we digress.

It is a pleasure to be here with you. I am happy to yield my usual spot so you can utilize the benefit of the chair.

I want to pick up on some of what Mr. MEEK has been talking about this evening, because for the last 2 weeks or so we have been subjected as Americans to the onslaught of dialogue on the Republican side of the aisle in terms of their view of national security and how it is only through their continued leadership and their continued driving of the agenda and continuing in the direction that they have taken America that we will be able to remain safe.

Yet I find it really interesting, and I have an illustrative chart here that I would like to walk through quickly, that there are people, very prominent people, people who have the expertise, that know that nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, last Monday, which was the anniversary of September 11, former Governor Tom Kean of New Jersey and former Member of Congress Lee Hamilton, Republican and Democrat, the co-chairs of the 9/11 Commission, issued a blistering analysis that was published in papers across the country, but particularly in the Boston Globe, which is your home paper, Mr. DELAHUNT, that they reiterated that the report card that the 9/11 Commission had given the Congress in December included 10 Cs, 12 Ds and 4 Fs. That was a clarion call last December to the Congress and this Republican leadership.

They were saying look, you are not moving in the right direction. You have an opportunity to change course. You have an opportunity to make a commitment to homeland security and

to shoring up our national security; do it. We are the ones that reviewed the gaps, and we recommended to you how we could close those gaps and you have not done it.

Here is what they said last Monday. They said, "What we argued then is still true now. Americans are safer, but we are not yet safe." Then they walked through what still needed to be done. This chart is illustrative of what they talked about in this editorial.

First, they said homeland security dollars must be allocated wisely. They indicated that right now we are not allocating funding on the basis of risks and vulnerabilities. The Republican leadership is actually doing it on an earmark basis. They are giving out little pots of money around the country to make individual Members happy so they can say I brought home some security dollars for my district instead of concentrating on the areas where the real risks and vulnerabilities are.

They went on further and said States and localities need to have emergency response plans and practice them regularly. The problem is, there isn't a creation of State and local response plans going on, and from the moment disaster strikes, all first responders need to know what to do and who is in charge, and that is not happening.

Third, they called on Congress to give first responders a slice of the broadcast spectrum that is ideal for emergency communications. Right now, as you can see, that is not going to happen until 2009. Do you remember the interoperability and communication that was talked about as the problem that occurred on 9/11 when the firefighters and the police officers and all of the first responders and then the Intelligence Community, FBI and all of the law enforcement agencies, couldn't talk to each other because their systems don't communicate with each other. That still hasn't been fixed, and one of the problems is that the broadcast spectrum is not going to be turned over until 2009.

Number four, there has not been enough progress on information sharing among government agencies. There are still turf fights and gaps in information sharing, especially with State and local authorities. We have to shut off the turf battles, increase information sharing among government agencies, and make sure that these entities can talk to each other.

This can't be about turf anymore. This has to be about making sure that there is a seamless system, that there is a system through which information can flow so that when there is danger that is either imminent or is occurring, there can be the communication that was so absent on 9/11.

Fifth, FBI reform is moving in the right direction, but far too slowly. They said you need to speed up FBI reform, improve FBI technology and analytical capabilities, and lower the workforce turnover. Those things still have not occurred 5 years later.

Six, we have taken a special interest in the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board which we recommended and the Congress and created, but we have to protect privacy and civil liberties and make sure that they function with oversight with the executive branch.

Clearly, Mr. DELAHUNT and I know better than anybody after our Judiciary meeting today, there isn't any interest in oversight in terms of the Republican leadership in this Congress. They have essentially been willing to cede our legislative authority to the executive branch. It is shocking. I don't know whether they just didn't take the same civics classes as we did or whether they are just so trusting of this Presidency.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If I may offer another theory, another hypothesis. It is about politics. It is about retaining power.

What happened in the Committee on the Judiciary today was on the issue of the detainees. The President has come out with a proposal and that proposal was summarily rejected by three prominent U.S. Senators, all Republican. One was the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, JOHN WARNER; JOHN MCCAIN, who was imprisoned during Vietnam for years, who understood what it means to serve his country in the most dire of circumstances, and exit a hero; and LINDSEY GRAHAM, a lawyer who served in the military as a military lawyer; because they understood that if the President's proposal is accepted, it will put at risk American service personnel.

□ 2145

And what we did today, in effect, was to turn our back and not listen, not just to them, but more than 40 retired generals, admirals, men and women who have served this country, including the former Chief of Staff of the Joint Chiefs, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who said this is a mistake in a letter endorsing the proposal to JOHN MCCAIN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Yes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Because it comes down to this, that this is another, I think, election year situation. But the bottom line is this: We opt out of the Geneva Convention, and we make a certain set of rules to say how military prisoners should be treated, just because if we do that, we have a certain set of standards, it does not mean other countries won't opt out, and their standards will be a heck of a lot lower than our standards.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. RYAN, the military doesn't want us to do it.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Nobody wants to do it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. The military, because they know that the men and women that serve will be put at risk, they will be in danger, that is why they don't want it to happen.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. JOHN MCCAIN, who has actually been through it, the most well-known political prisoner in our country's history, now, given the modern media today and the kind of fame that he has generated, says that this is a bad thing for our soldiers. This isn't about anyone else's soldiers. This is about our soldiers. You want to be promilitary? You want to be pro-U.S. soldier? You want to protect our soldiers? You failed them on body armor. You failed them with a plan to get out. And now if they get caught, you are going to say there are no international standards in which we can hold these other countries by, and you will be able to do anything you want to the American soldiers.

Now, we know there are rogue people, but there are many people who will get political prisoners and actually abide by the rules. We know there are some that won't. But to go against JOHN MCCAIN and to go against a JAG officer like LINDSEY GRAHAM, and to go against Mr. WARNER, Chair of the Armed Services Committee, who has been in for years.

Mr. DELAHUNT. That is inviting danger for the American soldier, the American service personnel. And by the way, testimony before the Senate by the senior serving JAG advocate said we don't need it.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And let's be honest here, Mr. Speaker. This is a joke because this is about 84 percent of America's top national security experts saying we are losing the war in Iraq. This is about all these generals that we have been showing night in and night out saying there is no plan to get out of here, there was a bad plan to get in, there was a bad plan to start with. There was no plan, bad information, bad intelligence, nothing was right. Look back at everything they said about using the oil for reconstruction money, about being greeted as liberators, about all this nonsense that we heard before.

This is an opportunity for this administration, Mr. MEEK, to try to change the subject. And all of a sudden we are talking about a few political prisoners, and it has enormous ramifications.

But the bottom line is this: This administration wants to talk about anything but the war and the economy. They want to change the subject anytime they get a chance to. And now we have got this debate about military prisoners. And I am not saying it is not important, but my God, you have got millions of people living in poverty. You have got seniors whom you are threatening with their Medicare. You have got 40 some million people with no health insurance. You have stagnant wages. You have gas prices going up. You have health care going up. You have tuition going up. You have poverty rates going up. You have got veterans' benefits going down. And you want to talk about this one little sliver to change the subject, and you are

coming up with all these new phrases again, "Islamofascism" and all this other stuff.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Let me finish, Mr. MEEK, because the bottom line is this, here is the cost: \$8.4 billion per month, \$1.9 billion per week in Iraq, \$275 million per day in Iraq, \$11.5 million per hour in Iraq. If this is the legacy of the Bush administration, you know what? If I was in the White House, I wouldn't want to talk about this either. I would talk about anything possible other than this fact.

You want to start talking about providing health care for millions of citizens? You want talk about lower tuition costs? You want to talk about investing in alternative energy sources to reduce our dependence on foreign oil? You want to talk about what Mr. MICA wants to do with airline security and port security? We have got the money. We have got the money. But we are spending it in a black hole called Iraq.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If the gentleman will yield, I am going to have to leave before the hour is over, and I have to take Mr. RYAN since he laid it out in the field last night. But let me say this very quickly. The facts are what the facts are. Some individuals say it is what it is. And the bottom line is we have a rubber-stamp Republican majority.

I do not spend a lot of time, Mr. Speaker, talking about what the White House should have done and what they did do or whatever the case may be because I am a Member of Congress; so by my being elected in the 17th Congressional District, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, right next to your district, by the people of South Florida, they federalized me to come to the Congress to do what? Carry out Article I, section 1 of the U.S. Constitution. That means the legislative body has oversight and is the investigative body. We are not doing any of those.

Let me just take a moment. Today we had a number of visitors to the Capitol. The American Cancer Society came to the Capitol. A number of survivors came to the Capitol. They have a walk that is going on right now outside on the Mall near the reflection pool of the Capitol.

I want to commend them for their efforts for coming here to Washington, D.C. I want to also say they have a Wall of Hope out there for those individuals that are survivors and those individuals that have passed on. I know Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ had a joint press conference on breast cancer today. I think it is important that we lift those individuals up because I know that there are Americans who could not make it.

My sister is a breast cancer survivor. I went out with Mr. RYAN this evening to sign the wall for Florida, and I put

my sister's name in. She couldn't be here. I called her and told her that I put her name on the wall. I had an opportunity to sign it.

I know that we in the Congress, all of us, are a part of making sure that we have enough research to be able to look and find ways that either we can prevent cancer from happening, or find medicines and procedures that can take away the issue of cancer. I know there is a commitment by 2015 to eradicate all cancer here in the U.S. So that is very, very important.

I just wanted to lay that out because I know we wanted to all commend them. We have serious issues that we are talking about, but at the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have got to lay out the commitment of those who did come up here.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. MEEK. I am glad you touched on that. I lost both my grandmothers to lung cancer, and, unfortunately, in America we all know someone who has been touched by cancer, and it is so incredibly important that Congress redouble its effort and commitment to funding the research so that in our lifetimes as 30-somethings, we can see a cure for not just lung cancer, but cancer of all types in our lifetime and during our congressional careers. So I know we all are committed to that.

Mr. DELAHUNT, I think we are wrapping up. Do you have any additional items to add?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Again, I would say that I think what is being revealed to the American people is that this administration is really driven by politics.

We hear now about immigration and border protection, but for 6 years they have been the majority in this body, they have been the majority in the Senate and have owned the White House, they had an opportunity to vote and to support Democratic proposals which would have strengthened border security. And a comparison, I think, is in order here right now.

The average number of new Border Patrol agents that were added per year during the Clinton administration was 642; during the Bush administration, 411. Immigration fraud cases that were completed in 1995, almost 6,500; in 2003, on the average, 1,300.

And what I find particularly fascinating is those cases that were filed against employers for hiring illegal immigrants, in 1999 there were some 417. In 2004, there were three.

The reality is the resources were never provided to enforce the existing laws that would have served us well, and now we are hearing about border protection. There is no other conclusion that one can reasonably reach other than it is great politics in an election year to energize the so-called base. But it is not fair to the American people on an issue that really needs to be debated in a respectful and civil way and analyzed appropriately.

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate once again the opportunity to come before the House of Representatives tonight and bring the latest version of the Official Truth Squad.

You have heard a lot of information over the last hour, much of which, in terms of its tenor and its tone, was the genesis for the Official Truth Squad, because what we as Republican freshmen Members of Congress determined about a year or a little over a year ago was that there was an awful lot of disinformation and misinformation and distortion and demagoguery and division, attempting to divide the Nation in such a way that it did a disservice to everybody. And, Mr. Speaker, you have heard an awful lot of that over the last hour.

We have got some very serious things to talk about tonight, but I wanted to spend a few moments and just try to lower the temperature a little bit, try to decrease the calamity that you have just heard. You have heard a lot of discussion about all sorts of issues, mostly national security issues. You have heard some claims about the 9/11 Commission and how none of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission have been proposed or adopted by Congress.

But what the Official Truth Squad is all about is about truth. It is about fact. It is about real things. And one of our favorite quotes comes from Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who had just a great quote. He said that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but nobody is entitled to their own facts. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not their own facts. And that is important, Mr. Speaker, because when you hear all these things, these accusations and incredible distortions that are leveled, very rarely are they ever rooted in fact.

And I am here to give you a few instances of fact, and I just want to spend a few moments to talk about national security and the 9/11 Commission recommendations because the distortions have been phenomenal.

We have on the other side of the aisle, the Democrat side of the aisle, a leader who has said within the last 2 weeks that she didn't believe that the capture of Osama bin Laden would make America any safer. That is a stunning statement from the individual who wants to be third in line to the Presidency, a stunning statement. She has also, as well as so many individuals on the other side have, called for the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Well, in fact, what they ought to do is look in the mirror or talk to their colleagues, because Capitol Hill Democrats have repeatedly, repeatedly opposed legislation implementing rec-

ommendations of the 9/11 Commission that were meant to strengthen America's national security and prevent further terrorist attacks. And I have just got a couple of them here for you, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to share with you.

The 9/11 Commission stated: "The government has made significant strides in using terrorism finance as an intelligence tool."

□ 2200

Yet the Democrats voted, 174 of them voted "no." Voted "no" for the bill that would allow us to continue to use that kind of intelligence in making certain that we can capture terrorists, find terrorists. "No."

The 9/11 Commission recommendation, they call for its adoption and its implementation. We propose it on the floor of the House in a responsible way, in a positive way to try to make America safer, and what do the vast majority of the Democrats on the other side of the aisle do? Vote "no," 174 of them.

The 9/11 Commission says, "The REAL ID Act has established statute standards for State-issued IDs acceptable for Federal purposes, though State compliance needs to be closely monitored."

So the REAL ID Act that this House passed that was signed into law with the good work of a Republican House and a Republican Senate and signed by the President, how many folks on the other side of the aisle, our good friends who have just been clamoring for adoption of the 9/11 recommendations, how many supported it? Well, I will tell you that 152, the vast majority of them, voted "no," voted "no" on the REAL ID Act.

Again, the 9/11 Commission says, the House and the Senate have taken positive steps, but Secretary Chertoff and his team still report to too many bosses. The House and the Senate Homeland Security Committees should have exclusive jurisdiction over all counterterrorism functions of the Department of Homeland Security.

And when that recommendation of the 9/11 Commission is proposed on the floor of the House, where are our friends on the other side of the aisle who clamor over and over for adoption of these recommendations? The majority of them, 120, vote "no," vote "no," Mr. Speaker.

So as a member of the Official Truth Squad, as an individual who has been frustrated, when I go home and talk to folks, they want us to work together. And I encourage individuals to work together. These are not Republican problems that we have or Democrat problems, they are American problems, they are American challenges.

So I encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to throw fewer stones, throw fewer barbs, be less political. I know it is an election season, and that is fine, but there are real problems and real challenges to solve.

We have real solutions, and we encourage and invite our colleagues on